

Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Parks and Recreation Commission
Wednesday, November 6, 2002

Present: Chairperson Bill Heckman, Commissioners Shelley Anderson, David Fortney, Leigh Hersey, Nona Oliver, and Stephen Owens

Absent: Commissioner Lynn Timmons Edwards

Staff Present: Debra Baird, Brad Bishop, Deputy Chief Cocca, Jona Davis, Bill Exham, Steve Lehmann, John Little, Bill Murphy, Officers Paul Arnold and Chris Hall, Marc Ranney, Will Scott, Chris Thom, Judy Weiss, Rose Williams, and Brad Wisler

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Heckman called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Chairperson Heckman asked everyone to observe a moment of silence.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Commissioner Hersey moved the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 2, 2002 and the Work Study Session of October 23, 2002 be approved as submitted. Commissioner Anderson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

MCDOWELL MOUNTAIN RANCH REVISED MASTER SITE PLAN

Bill Exham, Community Services General Manager, presented the revised master site plan for the proposed Phase 2 of the McDowell Mountain Ranch Park to be located at Thompson Peak Parkway and McDowell Mountain Ranch Road. Mr. Exham provided the Commission with an overview of the project including the history, planning, issues, demographics, and concerns. Mr. Exham advised that, if the Commission could not come to a consensus on the options presented, then the plan would revert to the original master plan. The timing of the construction will depend on the economy due to the operation and maintenance costs associated with the development of the site. Upcoming meetings on this issue will include the Planning Commission on November 13, 2002 and the City Council on January 6, 2003. Phil Weddle, Weddle and Associates, presented the master plan for the site including traffic and site analyses and the proposed improvements as a result of the findings.

Commissioner Fortney asked what was the purpose for the small road at the library. Mr. Weddle said it provides a right in and right out of the site for the library and allow direct access to the library, therefore reduce the pressure at the intersection of McDowell Mountain Ranch Road and Thompson Peak Parkway.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the installation of the gate was at the school's discretion. Mr. Weddle said it is being proposed as an option and it will be up to the school and the City's Parks Department to determine how to manage it. Commissioner Anderson asked if it would be installed initially. Mr. Weddle said it would.

Chairperson Heckman noted that, in all the information, all traffic studies we have seen to date indicate the loop road is not needed to mitigate any traffic concerns. John Little, General Manager of Transportation, said that the site is not dependent on the loop; however, the road does offer some advantages for the site from a traffic circulation standpoint and would be supported by the Transportation Department. Chairperson Heckman asked if the road proves to be necessary is the funding available to include the road. Mr. Little said it was. Commissioner Anderson asked if Option B as presented includes the loop road. Mr. Little said it does.

Chairperson Heckman called for any public comments.

Christine Schild, 10849 E. Jasmine Dr., said she supports Option B. She is a participant in activities at many parks. She moved to Scottsdale in 1993 to be close to Scottsdale Ranch Park. She is familiar with traffic generated by a park. She has researched this project and was told about the plans for the center and a sign was placed on the property. There were initial concerns because there was only one entrance. A light will be added at 102nd Way and a separate entrance to the park. The site will have little impact on traffic on Thompson Peak Parkway. The skateboard park will be a safe place for teens to congregate. The community needs recreation facilities within walking distance. Residents want the fitness center and Scottsdale needs another pool. The nay-sayers are similar to those that thought the ice den would affect the values. It has had a positive impact on the community and the aquatics center will do the same. She urges the Commission to recommend approval of Option B with at least a single lane loop road.

Patricia Hanshaw 10778 E Palm Ridge Dr., stated she is a native Arizonan and has lived in Scottsdale about 2-1/2 years. McDowell Mountain Ranch is a unique community as there is only one way in and one way out. There was an occasion where she was trying to leave her house and go down to 107th. A car caught on fire on the bridge so there was no access. The community has the potential to be landlocked and not have access to help. She feels that Option B would bring too much traffic. Sometimes it takes 4 to 6 lights to get out or into the community. Many children and people will get impatient because it takes so long. Then the children will suffer because the people will drive faster and more wildly when they are anxious and upset. She urges the Council choose the DMB property and locate this somewhere else.

Kim Abbs, 9719 E. Pine Valley Rd., asked the Commission to approve the proposed center, skateboard park, and fitness center at this site. She has been a resident for 19 years and has lived at Scottsdale Horizon for 10 years. The center is closer to her home than many McDowell Mountain Ranch residents so she feels her opinion is as important as anyone's. She voted to approve the bond for the park, as did the majority of neighbors. A resounding amount of citizens she has spoken with want the pool here and are tired of the delays. The Bond vote should count. With 3 children participating in swim and with her oldest daughter a competitive diver, she said we have needed a 4th pool desperately for years. There are long waiting lists, crowds, and the current pools are at inconvenient locations for this area. This is the right place for the pool, skatepark, and park, with the right access, and the right size.

Kenneth Lewis, 11026 E Verbena Lane, is in favor of the project. His business is an engineering consultant and Scottsdale is one of his biggest clients. He originally didn't think it was necessary until he saw some incorrect information about a year ago. A group was formed to address the issues sensibly and the group has met with several council members to have objective discussions about the project. It is a beautiful project. Fact 1 – a pool is needed; Fact 2 – the facility has been planned for over 10 years; Fact 3 – this is the 3rd Phase of a 3 Phase project; Fact 4 – was concern about the traffic; Fact 5 – the traffic concerns have been addressed; Fact 6 – there were safety concerns; Fact 7 – the safety issues have been addressed through the physical separation from the school and the skatepark is visible from the center; Fact 7 – no other site has the benefits of this site; Fact 8 – it would be very expensive to start the planning process at other sites.

Gary Neiss, 16488 N. 106th Pl., is a resident of McDowell Mountain Ranch, and speaking for a group that formed in support of the facility, the McDowell Mountain Ranch Park Task Force. Many made the choice to move to this community to be close to public amenities not further away. This is not a regional use and not similar in scale to commercial water parks. It is a community park. The function is to serve adjacent neighborhoods and schools. It makes sense to locate them next to schools as they serve children. There is access to pathways and trails. The vision of McDowell Mountain Ranch Park epitomizes what constitutes a community park. It is a family oriented community. Mr. Neiss read a quote from the McDowell Mountain Ranch website which a copy was distributed to the commission. This is a spot to bring neighborhoods together and not separate them. Trails have grade separations throughout the development. This park has a long history. Mr. Neiss outlined the history and provided the Commission with some demographic information regarding the planning unit the site is located in. The voters ratified the General Plan and the zoning ratifies the park. A Master Plan provides for a sense of predictability. The Master Plan was adopted in 1995 prior to most of the homes being developed. In the year 2000 both

McDowell Mountain Ranch and Scottsdale Horizon Community supported the line item to build the center by a 3-1 margin. The issues have been addressed including traffic concerns. The desert character is being preserved through the Natural Area Open Space. Parks belong next to residential areas so those that are the least mobile, like children, can access them. There are approximately 13,000 children that will have access to the site. Why should those who made a less informed decision penalize those families that made an informed decision to be close to an aquatics center and these types of amenities. Now is the time to build it. Chairperson Heckman asked if the 13,000 children under the age of 18 were in the immediate area of only McDowell Mountain Ranch. Mr. Neiss said it included both the greater McDowell Mountain Ranch area and the Scottsdale Horizon area.

Sandy Esmay, 10618 E. Betony Dr. and an employee of Sunbelt Holdings, developer for this community said from the very first printed piece of information Kurt Smith advised the community about the proposed park site through quotes and publications. The proposed park has been a very positive amenity that the developer has associated with the development. Ms. Esmay has made over 1,000 presentations to potential homeowners and she doesn't recall one instance of telling a potential buyer about this site and ever getting a negative reaction. All of the modern maps produced from 1995 to now show the complete built out site featuring the pools and so forth. The City opened a Citizen Service Center at the School in 1996 and information about the site was available there also. Finally, when the Information Center closed in June of 2000 Sunbelt mailed newsletters to all residents and the site was outlined there. Ms. Esmay provided copies of all these documents to the Commission.

Charles Black, 16593 N. 105th St., is against the center. Where were the numbers the previous speaker spoke of when a vote was taken and was against the project by 3 to 1 which is a percentage greater than those that elected City officials. He is against it for safety reasons and concerns for the children. The residents already have pools. The people who want the park are from outside the community. There are over 1,000 people who don't want it. The numbers that say there are 100s of thousands of people that want the facility amazes him. He is not sure which information center he went to but he didn't hear about this. It comes down to fact that we are concerned about children, things that may occur at the center, the proximity to the school, and the traffic volume. He is amazed about the traffic studies and stands in opposition and asks the Commission to vote no.

Don Loper, 10761 E. Laurel Ln., has a daughter going to the school and has a vested interest in the safety of children at the center. After hearing about traffic he decided to go out and get his own information. He displayed photographs he took of the traffic flow in the area in the morning and afternoon hours. He hopes the Commission sees a pattern to the pictures. The site is about ¼ mile from the nearest home and the final phase of a park designed in 1995 and is already 30% complete. Traffic issues have been resolved. He doesn't want to argue about the validity of surveys, comment cards, etc. The real reason to build the park is that we are a democratic society and have resoundingly voted yes. Build it now.

Mary Lee Sturgen, 10883 E. LeMarche Dr., noted the opposition is from primarily senior citizens in this development. She is here in favor of Option B. She has lived in Scottsdale since 1963 and is here on behalf of children of the community who are the primary users. Her granddaughter is here to speak tonight also. There are many reasons this is needed for the children. Cactus Pool is overcrowded. We need to provide more lessons for children to help to reduce drawings. These types of opportunities give children the ability to develop self-esteem, confidence and physical powers. Some have advocated building this at an alternate site and that may need to be done at some future point. She hopes she is alive to plead with the Commission to build that one also in addition to McDowell Mountain Ranch Park. She thanked the Commission and staff for doing a yeoman's job to make this site better.

Callie Decher, 10473 E. Star of the Desert Dr., attends the elementary school and swims at Cactus Park. She has to be driven to Cactus Park. She would rather have a closer location and feels it would eliminate traffic. After practice one day she saw people out collecting vote of yes or no on this project. None of them asked her or came to her house so she feels all of the votes were not collected. As to the noise it would bring to the community, what would the community be without parents cheering for their children.

Dwayne Richard, 16519 N. 106th Way, has lived in the community for 6 years and has seen change and growth during that time. He knew about each one of the projects (school, park, pool) prior to moving to the community. He did his homework. There golf course is close by and there have been no complaints about it. He remembers the same concerns expressed about the ice den. They didn't happen and it won't happen at this facility either. Traffic is a problem but if so many people didn't pick up and drop off their children at school there would be less traffic. Parents insist on driving their children rather than letting them walk or ride the bus. There are speed problems and that must be policed. Amenities are built to increase the quality of life in the development. When the football fields were built there were 100 families that didn't have to travel to participate in Pop Warner. Please don't give in to the nay-sayers and those trying to steer us with unfounded fear. This has been in plans and has been approved so approve Option B. Please don't take away the aquatics park.

Daniel Sommer, 10346 E. Morning Star Dr., and Co-chair of McDowell Mountain Ranch Park Committee, wants an aquatics center but not at this site. This is not a nimby issue. The City has done studies of alternate sites such as site "L" which the committee recommends. This site has received the thumbs up by the City. There aren't any houses near the site. The Master Plan was approved a long time ago and the Bond was approved in 2000, however Master Plans change all the time. Mr. Sommer cited examples of previous Master Plans that have changed. Master Plans change to adapt to what is going on. The Bond issue asked "Do you want an aquatics center and expand the library" and people voted for it. Now that people understand what is to be at the site 72% of the McDowell Mountain Ranch residents responded that they did not want the center at this site (21% of all residents responded). The survey was done by the homeowners' association not the committee. McDowell Mountain Ranch has already given to the Scottsdale community through other amenities. The Kimley Horne map does not include some commercial development along Thompson Peak Parkway. When development is completed north of Thompson Peak Parkway there will be an additional 10,000 cars on that roadway. This does not include the increased traffic for the aquatics center and the library. The study was done in October. Why wasn't it done using the numbers in June when more people will be using the park. The numbers are low. The count does not include the 1,700 homes being built north of Bell. The road will be over its capacity. The Commission's recommendation to the City Council carries a lot of weight. Don't sacrifice the quality of life at McDowell Mountain Ranch for the "Betterment of Scottsdale." The residents have the right to live in peace. Please move the aquatics center to the alternative location "L." This is a site where everybody wins. Chuck Wright, Kimley Horn, said the all the uses generating traffic in the area were taken into consideration including the aquatics center and the school. The school activity is virtually non-existent in the summer and the activity at the aquatics center would be higher in the summer. The study tried to use a cross-section of conditions and determined that, with the school and overall increases in trips in the winter as a result of increased population, it was determined that October would be a good representation of traffic to use for the study. Chairperson Heckman asked if October was a typical time of the year for volume. Mr. Wright said, while other periods may have more volume, October proves to be typical for designing purposes. Chairperson Heckman asked what the traffic count would be on Thompson Peak Parkway when other developments are built. Mr. Wright said the numbers were compared for a typical 4-lane roadway. This was more refined by the turning movements verses the through movements and a sensitivity analysis was done. It was determined the roadway could accommodate the projected additional 10,000 cars per day without any problems. Chairperson Heckman asked what additional traffic the center will bring over and above any additional development. Mr. Wright said it would be less than 10%. Mr. Little said when projections are done they are not projecting that all the traffic will be on Thompson Peak Parkway. Completion of the road to the north will offer an alternative to going through McDowell Mountain Ranch. Union Hills will be a 4-lane road with a 35,000-car capacity along with other roadways that will provide a broader traffic network than is in place today.

John Blangiardo, 10823 E. Autumn Sage, is a retired educator. He grew up in Brooklyn and knows how important parks are. He is not opposed to aquatics or skatepark but is opposed of placing the aquatics center at McDowell Mountain Ranch. He took time to visit the Wedge and Paradise Valley skateparks and they are effective facilities with lots of open space around them. That is not the case at this facility as it is being squeezed into a postage size space. There is a need for these facilities and there are requests from youth to build them. This is not an appropriate amenity at this site. McDowell Mountain Ranch does suffer from vandalism, evidence of alcohol abuse and use, and theft of the community property. He

visited Horizon to look at the portable skate equipment and it was closed because of midnight break-in in at the facility. The matter had not been reported to the police and staff is dealing with it internally by not allowing access for a week as a consequence. Kids will be kids but when a park is built in an appropriate space it does not become a nuisance to the community that surrounds it. The loop road will be an extension of the skatepark. The multi-age use of the skatepark is also a concern. We should work together to find a site that will work. Commissioner Oliver asked where would you like it. Mr. Blangiardo said DC Ranch seems to be an appropriate space as they have so much vacant land and we owe it to the children to find adequate facilities. Commissioner Oliver asked how much of the land "L" does city own now. Judy Weiss, Manager in Parks, Recreation & Facilities, said the City is in the process of obtaining that sight through a swap with DMB for another site. Mr. Blangiardo said the city is doing a disservice to cut back the size of the site. Chairperson Heckman noted the cut back resulted as a result of a request from the community. There is plenty of space to build the full 30,000 sq.ft. Commissioner Oliver asked how much it would cost. Ms. Weiss said the cost to the taxpayers would be zero.

David Matisou, 10447 E. Texas Sage Ln., can't imagine how the Parks and Recreation Department and the Commission can justify the intensive uses that are being proposed at this site. The area is already stressed with traffic. There are lit fields at the site. There is planned commercial development and that will increase. There is Westworld, Horizon Park and much more along with plans for future development. One of the intended major users is the Cavcreek School District. That boundary is at Jomax. He suggests moving this facility into the area that is to be served by it. All parks are from the canal south. Everything north is unlit. The City needs additional recreational facilities. It is not being put into the area that needs it. The loop road should be a stipulation of the plan. He spoke to staff and they indicated that the amenities that were removed from the park would cover the costs of the road. He disputes that claim. The consultant recommended that 2 lanes of traffic be done to accommodate the use. That means the City would have to purchase additional land, which is US Government land that is worth \$17 million by the Assessors. There is a tremendous lack of planning. He asked the City for the plans and you can't get the plans unless you have the case number. The plans say that specifics will be arrived at for this site at a future time. We are still waiting for those specifics. Is it appropriate to put water slides and lazy rivers in a desert community that is an environmentally sensitive area. He does not think so. There are so many lights, retail, and intensive use in this area. Chairperson Heckman said the largest concentration of youth is in this area. Mr. Matisou said that the trails map put the largest concentration north of this area. Chairperson Heckman said, on the lack of specifics, we have to get through this process in order to get to the point of developing the site.

Lowell Hicks, 11007 E. Winchcomb Dr., said an undeveloped location should be selected for these amenities where the streets would be planned and developed to accommodate the traffic. He has great safety concerns for children pedestrians and motorists. The Kimley Horn study confirms this. He found the previous presentation interesting. If there is no loop road there are great concerns for traffic and safety on Thompson Peak Parkway and McDowell Mountain Ranch Road.

Arthur Mones, 15050 N. Thompson Peak Parkway, said there would be an intrusion from the noise, emissions, accidents, and increased traffic. There will be an immediate 11% increase in traffic in his neighborhood and it will increase 7% per year. There are no mandates to locate the facility at McDowell Mountain Ranch Road. According to staff there was no disclosure. He looked at the map at the sales office a week ago and there was no map there about the site. The City has identified 12 alternate sites with no intrusion to the neighborhoods of which 5 are free, 4 could be leased, and 3 could be purchased. The City needs to be more creative. None of the purchase numbers are insurmountable. He looked at the budget and found \$13 million in discretionary funds for outside services. Avoidance is an issue. Look at the low noise asphalt along the freeway that is costing the City millions. The Commission is appointed by the City Council and he is asking the Commission declare their independence and assert their integrity to send a message to the Planning Commission and Council that you can do good things for recreation and protect people from intrusion. Cactus Pool is only 5.5 miles away and serves the need. Do the right thing for the whole city.

Bob Alico, 11043 E. Winchcomb, thinks the Commission should have a lot of questions. There was a break-in at Horizon. The police said at a previous meeting that there is no safety or vandalism problem.

He questions any statistics that he hears if you can report what you want to report. He has listened to the traffic people at one meeting. He looked at it and nowhere do the studies address the aging of the community. It has been stated there are over 13,000 kids in the community but nowhere were they factored into this. This is probably the most unsafe school he has ever seen. The park will throw in a tremendous number of visitors. The City and Commission has a responsibility and it is called in local parentis meaning you have the responsibility like a parent. Is this the safest thing to do for all these kids. He hopes the Commission uses this as a measuring stick.

Scott Graham, 10651 E. San Salvador Dr., is pro community and pro kids and activities. We should look at facilities such as Scottsdale Ranch Park as assets. We would not have any amenities if we take the approach of those who are against this project. Scottsdale Ranch Park is near his house and he has not noticed any change in crime, traffic. The properties have increased by almost 50%. It is for kids from within and outside of the neighborhood. People in the Scottsdale Ranch Community welcome McDowell Mountain Ranch residents to their senior center, parks, and facilities. All of these amenities have added to the experience of growing up in Scottsdale. Please, as the Commission looks at the issues, look past the emotional things, as they are general more imaginary than real. Think young. Please approve this as planned.

Ken Moore, 14615 N. 100th Way, represents the Arcadia Scottsdale United Soccer Club that is 2,500 children strong. He is for anything that benefits kids and their activities. He has spoken to many people and everybody seems to be for the skatepark and aquatics center. His son is looking forward to having the skatepark there. If it is located further north there is no way to get to it except driving. It needs to be done in this area. There are many against the park but there are many for it. We need to do it and what is best for the kids.

Joy Russell, 9106 N. 115th St., was told of a study that was done by ASU and the Morrison Institute called "Five Shoes Waiting to Drop" that talks about future impacts. It states that choices need to be made to be viable and parks are a must. We need to start being smart. She has served as a commissioner, on the PTO, and secretary of an Arizona swim corporation. The report clearly states that officials will have to make tough decisions and they must do what is best for the entire community, economic security, and the overall quality of life. There have been 2 votes on this issue. Backyard pools bring the need for safety concerns for the children. That then brings the need for organized swim lessons. Teams share Cactus Pool with other users. Meets are held at the same time. That would never happen with a football or basketball team. We need more pools in this community. If kids have something to do they will not get into trouble. All areas of Scottsdale share in the load that growth brings to the City. We all shared in the economic boom that raised values of homes. The bottom line is that we need these facilities for our overall well being. Residents will continue to come to Scottsdale because these amenities are in place. We hear about the wonderful amenities Chandler has for their citizens. Will people continue to come to Scottsdale without amenities? The Morrison Report says no. Extensive traffic studies have been done and the concerns have been addressed. It is time to stand up and speak for the future economic growth of Scottsdale.

Mary Versosky, 15184 N. 100th St., said no one is closer to the site than her. She invites the Commission to come to the corner of Thompson Peak Parkway and McDowell Mountain Ranch Road at 8 am and see the traffic. She cannot exit her street. Come and see where the entrances and exits to the park are going to be as they are very unsafe. People are going to die. Come and see for yourself. Put the park somewhere safe where the whole City can access it and find it. They aren't going to find the park at this site.

Chairperson Heckman concluded public testimony.

Commissioner Oliver has lived in Scottsdale for 41 years. When they built the new pool at Eldorado in 1967 the residents and she were hog heaven. When the renovation is completed it will be more wonderful than ever. She asked how the police feel about the statement that there is a lot going on in that area. She has been handicapped all of her life and swimming brought her back 11 times from not walking to walking. It is a beautiful spot to have all these facilities in one area. If it goes to the alternate

site "L" she would support it also. No matter how old or young you are, water is the most wonderful thing in the world. She thanked the young person who spoke for coming before the Commission. This park site is marvelous. How it is done will come. She invited all to come to the Eldorado Pool opening on July 4th to see how beautiful it will be.

Commissioner Fortney said, in work study the police said there was no intelligence on gang activity in north Scottsdale. Deputy Chief Cocca said there is nothing specific to McDowell Mountain Ranch. A list of all reported crimes within a mile of the park site can be provided along with a list of every call for service. Chairperson Heckman said he was told Scottsdale enjoys one of the lowest crime rates in the state. Deputy Chief Cocca said that for a city its size, Scottsdale has the lowest violent crime rate per 1,000 population. Chairperson Heckman asked about smaller issues. Deputy Chief Cocca said he would have to research it, but he believes it is still low. Chairperson Heckman said, within McDowell Mountain Ranch, he understands it is the lowest. Deputy Chief Cocca said overall that would be true. Deputy Chief Cocca quoted the statistics for the Commission. Chairperson Heckman asked if there were any concerns about the safety of this location. Deputy Chief Cocca said safety is always a concern due to the human factor. History of parks shows there is just over 1 call per month at Cactus and just over 2 per month at Eldorado. Based on usage those statistics are extremely low. Commissioner Hersey asked, with the exception of bike violations, have the police noticed an increase in crimes reported at Eldorado since the Skatepark opened. Deputy Chief Cocca said there is an increase in calls for service. In relation to users verses reports it is not significant.

Chairperson Heckman asked about site "L", he understands it is being made available at no charge and does it compare in size to the McDowell Mountain Ranch site. Mr. Exham said that site was originally farther northeast on the DC ranch property and identified to accommodate the neighborhood park amenities. Staff approached DMB and asked if there wasn't another appropriate site farther from Ironwood Village. The proposed site is smaller than what is planned at McDowell Mountain Ranch but could be considered. Some of the planned park amenities would need to be eliminated. Chairperson Heckman noted that Sonoran Hills was a neighborhood park and never meant as a regional facility and the homes were painfully close to the park. We lost 2-lit fields at that site. In every improvement something goes away. Chairperson Heckman asked what the impact on the timeline would be. Mr. Exham said the public process would have to start over since that site was never identified as an aquatics center. The City hasn't spoken to any residents near the site as yet. Staff has reviewed the drainage issues and the site has potential. Chairperson Heckman said the land is free so would it be cost comparable to McDowell Mountain Ranch. Mr. Exham said the main benefit is that McDowell Mountain Ranch has been developed and the infrastructure is in place. With other properties the City would have to start from scratch and it probably would be a little more expensive.

Commissioner Anderson acknowledged the amount of work, time and concern that the City has exhibited to this project and to the citizens. Staff has come back with a better plan than was originally presented. There have been traffic improvements included in the changes. Everyone should know that it is an arduous process, and we feel that the citizens involved have made this come to the plan it is today which is a much improved plan.

Commissioner Owens wanted all to know that, although his appointment to the Commission was only 2 days ago, he has reviewed all the materials on the project and plans to be involved in the decision this evening. This was a sudden process for him and at no time did anyone affiliated with the City ask for or try to sway his opinion on the issue. This speaks a lot for the way the City has approached the issue. He noted he has 2 children that are active in youth activities including football, basketball, swimming, and little league. He or his wife has not felt a concern for the safety at Desert Canyon and does not feel that his children would be exposed to added danger from having a center like this in the area. As a parent of 2 young children his family has taken part in a number of events in the parks throughout the City and the one thing that makes Scottsdale unique is both the number of parks and the amenities. We do not have enough parks but the ones we have are crowded or inaccessible when they are most needed. He believes that we need more parks and need to have them be successful. He appreciates the comments made by the public this evening. He does believe the concerns have been addressed and the City has done a very good job to address them. He would like to see Staff continue to work with the community to

insure that the loop road is put in and that any other issues that arise are addressed. He is pleased to be involved and to support the issue.

Chairperson Heckman said the trend of growth has continued as the community succeeds. We have watched other facilities that have gone up and it is wonderful to see the development. We want to be sensitive to the community. Originally we didn't know there was so much concern but this has become an emotional and difficult issue. The biggest concerns at the meetings were traffic. Mr. Mones said it would be a 11% increase in traffic. Just to clarify, that was not the statement. The impact would be less than 10% on Thompson Peak Parkway. There is going to be a lot of development on Thompson Peak Parkway and it will connect through DC Ranch. That road is set to handle that kind of volume and the facility will have a minor impact. The issue of McDowell Mountain Ranch roadways and transit within it is a challenge but this is not a significant contributor to that problem. Mr. Neiss noted that in the 2000 Bond election there was support from this community at a 3-to-1 ratio with 69% voting for the package. That is significant. We have talked about site alternate site "L" but that puts us back to square one. Is that fair to the citizens of Scottsdale and future generations. We should have had this facility somewhere years ago. The economy will play the important part in determining the time frame in which this would be built. The young man who was instrumental in initiating the Skatepark idea was in graduate school when it was dedicated. He feels comfortable that safety threat is nil and the Traffic Department has worked hard to implement improvements to alleviate the issues. Chairperson Heckman is proud to be a part of this process. Staff has reduced the density to allow for more Natural Area Open Space, relocated amenities 1,100 feet from the nearest home, eliminated those amenities not ranked high priority, scaled the skatepark back to 18,000 sq.ft., scaled the fitness center down, and moved to the aquatics facility and mitigated the lights by relocation and buffering. This has been done through the input from the public. The Planning Commission will hear this issue on November 13, 2002 and the City Council on January 6, 2003. These meetings will provide more opportunities for public input. Alternate sites would result in long time delays to move the project forward. This was planned long ago, ratified in 1995, and discussed for the better part of a year. Chairperson Heckman asked if the loop road is a part of Option B and if not it should be stipulated as a part of the motion. Ms. Weiss said it can be stipulated in the motion.

Commissioner Fortney moved that approve Option B with a stipulation for the loop road. Commissioner Anderson seconded. Commissioner Anderson added in development of loop road that the community continue to be in on the decisions. Commissioner Fortney agreed to the stipulation. The motion carried unanimously.

OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Chairperson Heckman called for any items from the floor. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Hersey moved the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Owens seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

With no further business to be brought before the Commission, Chairperson Heckman adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Ruth Johnson, Recording Secretary.

Meets established criteria.



Debra Baird, Director
Parks, Recreation & Facilities